

Career Development Guide

Cascade Campus Portland Community College, Portland, Oregon

To maximize your academic and professional development, each term you should be engaged in goal-targeted activities in the following areas:

Academic Planning
Campus & Community Involvement
Personal Growth
Career & Life Development

First/Second Term

EXPLORE

During the first term at Cascade you will want to spend time learning about yourself. You can do this by paying attention to the subjects you most enjoy, activities in which you take pleasure, and by talking with other students about career ideas and possibilities. In addition, you will want to discover the resources available to you on campus to help you plan your career.

Steps to help you:

- Begin to develop a relationship with your advisor and other members of the faculty. Talk with him or her about courses, requirements and other academic concerns.
- Schedule an appointment to meet with a career counselor to get started on your career planning. (It's never too early to start!) Take a CG 140 class and receive college credit for career/life planning
- Investigate campus clubs and civic activities that will help you get involved. Participate!
- Complete the self-assessment exercises with the Myers Briggs Type Indicator, Strong Interest Inventory and the information on CIS and DISCOVER.
- Identify five to ten careers to explore in depth.
- Spend time in the resource library in the Career Resource Center (lower level, Student Services Building – SSB 104) to identify career options.
- Attend career programs to hear from alumni and other professionals to gather more specific information.
- Conduct career-specific informational interviews.
- Browse the job announcements on Career Connections online.
- Begin occupational research – online sites and career center visits.
- Learn about current labor trends and salary information.
- Include volunteer opportunities and service learning (for credit) into your schedule to test compatibility and explore options.
- Begin planning an exploratory internship or Cooperative Education (co-op) experience CG280.
- Brush up on your study skills; time and stress management techniques.

Beyond Second Term

FOCUS

At this point, you will ideally want to narrow your career choices, make some tentative career decisions and declare a major. During these terms you can begin to explore career alternatives in depth, gain additional and

relevant experience, and talk with individuals who are experienced in your field of interest. Many PCC programs have pre-requisites, application deadlines, and start only in fall term. Be prepared well ahead of time. Gain as much work-related skills and experiences as you can handle. An academic degree is not enough to make you a strong applicant.

Steps to help you:

- Meet with a Career Counselor or Employment specialist to discuss your career plans and options check out the campus Career Center and associated web pages.
- Enroll in an introductory course of the majors you are exploring.
- Identify two or three careers to research in greater depth.
- Continue to conduct informational interviews.
- Schedule a meeting with your advisor and other members of the faculty to review and adjust your plans.
- Take specific and necessary courses to complete your major/minor with focus on your career.
- Meet with an Employment Specialist to have your resume and cover letters critiqued.
- Develop and practice effective interviewing skills. Talk to your Employment Specialist
- Have your career portfolio (Job Search documents) ready to begin your job search.
- Look for part-time and/or summer employment positions in your specific field.
- Secure an internship or volunteer position directly related to your career planning.
- Gather information about potential job opportunities and employers.
- Plan to attend campus-sponsored programs, which include panelists, to hear about their job and career planning process. Attend the Cascade Job Fair.
- Begin researching transfer programs if applicable.
- Register and prepare for any exams.
- Nurture your career network, including social media.
- Investigate professional associations in your industry.

Last Year

REFINE AND TRANSITION

Your final year will be full of activities which include term projects, completing program requirements, transitioning to full-time career-related employment, graduation, and saying good-bye to faculty, staff and friends. It is also important to begin your job search as soon as possible. It is time to begin planning for life after Portland Community College, Cascade Campus. Get that second or more advanced internship/coop.

Steps to help you:

- Meet with your advisor to finalize academic plans, petition to graduate.
- Set up final internships or a co-op that may lead to full time employment.
- Join professional associations (at student rate) and network online and at meetings and conferences.
- Meet with an Employment Specialist to have your resume and cover letters and master application updated.
- Hone interviewing skills.
- Obtain at least three letters of reference from faculty, internship supervisors, and employers.
- Continue to utilize all the resources in the Career Resource Center.
- Attend the Cascade Job Fair and others in the community.
- Begin your comprehensive job search and/or complete transfer school application materials.